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Hospitality Codes and Social Exchange Theory: The Pashtunwali and Tourism in Afghanistan

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Abstract

The Afghan people are shrouded in rumor, myth and superstition. Drawing upon insights from military personnel, intelligence operatives, journalists and others, this study uses Social Exchange Theory (SET) to frame our understanding of their underpinning cultural code, the *Pashtunwali*. The study contributes both theoretically and empirically: The nature of the *Pashtunwali* highlights that SET cannot adequately frame some cultural exchange practices and a hybrid framework for negotiated and reciprocal exchange is presented. Furthermore, contextually, this is the first study that explores a code of hospitality through a social exchange lens to explore potential tourism development. A framework exists upon which commercial activity can be built without altering beliefs, social dynamics or day to day pursuits. For commercial development to be successful, it must yield similar or greater levels of income to those that currently exist, more importantly, traditions of autonomy and self-dependence will affect employment and training within an emergent tourism industry.

Keywords

Afghanistan, tribal customs, hospitality, social exchange theory, development

Highlights

- Codes of hospitality in the Afghan tribal tradition of the Pashtunwali are explored
- We offer insight into unknown territory through empirical data from the armed forces
- A hybrid of social exchange theory amalgamates reciprocal and negotiated exchange
- We note potential for post-conflict development by harnessing embedded social codes

Social Exchange and the Pashtuns of Afghanistan

Drawing upon insights from military personnel, intelligence operatives, journalists and other aid workers, we apply Social Exchange Theory (SET) to explore problems with tourism development. The customs and practices of the Pashtun tribe of Afghanistan are enshrined in their cultural code: the *Pashtunwali*. The *Pashtunwali* contains an implicit exchange based on three tenets: honour (*nang*), revenge (*badal*) and hospitality (*melmastia*), none of which is economically driven. Codes of hospitality (O'Gorman, 2009, 2010b) highlight both possibilities and problems for tourism development as part of the regeneration of war-torn regions. In Nepal, for example McMillan, O'Gorman and Maclaren (2011) consider how embedded cultural practices can be commercially orientated. Intermeshed with stereotypes of insurgent terrorism, and either an inhibition or lack of opportunity to improve education and knowledge of Islam and its practice, the perceptions of social and cultural dynamics in the Middle East are somewhat shrouded in rumor and superstition. Understanding cultural practices of hospitality provide opportunities, both theoretically and practically, for tourism development, therefore the potential for the region following conflict is improved.

SET cannot adequately frame some cultural exchange practices thus our theoretical contribution is to offer a hybrid framework for negotiated and reciprocal exchange. The study considers two key research questions, namely: how is social exchange characterised through the *Pashtunwali*? And, does the code preclude the commercialization of Pashtun culture for tourism development? In addressing these the study attempts to extend SET and its framing of cultural practices through the developed hybrid model. Further, the consideration of hospitality codes from a more deeply rooted theoretical perspective seeks to extend previous research. Contextually, this is the first study that employs a code of hospitality as its unit of analysis, studied through a social exchange lens to explore potential tourism development.

This paper now divides into four sections. In section one review the origins and developments of SET in order to articulate a theoretical gap whilst also summarizing previous studies exploring codes of hospitality exchange. There follows a section on data collection methods and analysis. The next section is empirical, where the results espouse the research subjects' difficulty in

learning and engaging with the code as it neither appeared to govern a strictly negotiated exchange nor an implicit social phenomenon. In the final section of the paper we draw together the threads of our argument, consider the theoretical limitations of our approach and point to avenues for future research.

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory is rooted in sociology and anthropology (Cook & Rice, 2003; Firth, 1967) and has been applied widely in a business context. Frémeaux and Michelson (2011) state that social and business experience has surpassed what they term as the dominant logic of exchange - 'the existential gift' - highlighting that not all giving behaviour is based exclusively on the rationality and logic of reciprocity. Whereas Goss (2008), exploring emotional dynamics within entrepreneurial behaviour, suggests a more emotionally informed understanding could improve business. Finally, Ballinger and Rockman (2010) show how relationships can change between reciprocity-based and non-reciprocity-based forms through the course of one or a short sequence of exchanges.

SET offers a framework which may illustrate how individuals are contingent upon rewarding actions from others (Emerson, 1976). At its theoretical core is an assumption that all social life can be treated as an exchange of tangible and intangible rewards and resources between actors (Zafirovski, 2005; Homans, 1961); based on the premise that "all relationships have give and take" (Kaynak & Marandu, 2006, p. 229). Though different perspectives on SET have emerged, the approach primarily involves a series of interactions that engender social obligations (Emerson, 1976).

The most apparent distinction within social exchange is between reciprocal and negotiated exchange (Blau, 1964; Levi-Strauss, 1969). Through reciprocal exchange actors' contributions are separately performed, non-negotiated and initiated by performing beneficial acts for another (such as giving assistance or hospitality) for example, without knowing whether or to what extent others will reciprocate (Frémeaux & Michelson, 2011; Molm, Peterson, & Takahashi,

2003); even though such exchanges may carry social obligations and expectations. Reciprocal exchange is understood as devoid of explicit bargaining (Molm, 2003) and actors' actions are contingent upon other actors' behaviour; this process is likely to be continuous and once in motion each consequence can create self-reinforcing cycles of behaviour (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Reciprocal exchange is considered to be the dominant theoretical lens in the analysis of social relations (Frémeaux & Michelson, 2011) and a range of studies have empirically examined it. Blau (1964) proposed the very objective of exchange theory was to explain social life through analysing the reciprocal processes composing exchange. Mauss' early concern was to show that social exchange in tribal societies took the form of reciprocal gifts, rather than economic transactions (Heath, 1976).

Negotiated exchange is different, however, as exchange aligns with joint arrangements in which both parties seek explicit agreement on the terms of the exchange (Molm, et al., 2003) and thus each partner's benefits and costs are of measured value. Most exchange theorists maintain that exchange takes place if actors believe social exchange(s) provides them with greater utility than other current options as people establish and continue social exchange on the basis of mutual advantage (Zafirovski, 2005, p. 3). However, actors need not necessarily be better off than they were before as alternatives open to exchangers will determine how the rate of exchange falls (Uehara, 1990). Flynn (2005) suggests the goals for actors involved in negotiated exchange are different from those involved in other forms as they focus on the tangible benefits they may gain from participating, rather than the social rewards that may arise. Here, terms of exchange are often explicit as the exchange of benefits can be both immediate and very direct (Malhotra & Murnighan, 2002). Furthermore, Flynn (2005) provides an example of generalised exchange, where reciprocity is indirect and generalised where exchange stipulates repayment of kind deeds, but not necessarily by the original recipient or to the original giver (Yamagishi & Cook, 1993, as cited in Flynn, 2005, p.740).

SET is established in tourism research. Wang and Pfisters (2008) studied a small rural village examining residents' perceptions of the benefits from tourism. They suggest researchers interested in personal benefits through social exchange have focused on personal income and tax

revenue, amongst others areas, whilst research concerning non-economic value domains alternatively may be anchored in social, aesthetic, and less tangible matters. Kwon and Vogt (2010) on the other hand, analyse attitudes and opinions of local residents in relation to place marketing and incorporate a number of theories including social exchange in their study. They note how a range of authors have developed models focusing on residents' perceptions and attitudes relating to tourism by using social exchange as a theoretical basis, including that of Purdue, Long and Allen (1990), whose work may be regarded as amongst the most important in the field in terms of reference and attempts at development (e.g. Ap & Crompton, 1993; McGehee & Andereck, 2004).

SET has been commonly used to consider the attitudes and perceptions towards tourism, for example, the effects of tourism impacts on local support (Yoon, Gursoy, & Chen, 2001) and attitude (Getz, 1994), feelings about casino development (Lee, Kim, & Kang, 2003) and even attitudes to sex workers (Ryan & Kinder, 1996). Analysing several rural areas, Látková and Vogt (2011) argue for the suitability of SET in gleaning perceptions and attitudes towards tourism development, particularly in its ability to suggest that individuals are likely to participate in exchange if the perceived benefits exceed the costs. In effect, it supports the presumption that a person will seek to maximise profit in social situations (Chadwick-Jones, 1976) whilst guided by cost-benefit considerations (Molm, 1990).

Codes of Hospitality

Hospitality codes are an ancient phenomenon dating back to at least Hammurabi of Mesopotamia (circa 1850 BC) (O'Gorman, 2010a). However, they are more commonly recorded in the Homeric writings and in Classical Greece and Rome (O'Gorman, 2009, 2010b), for example, Odysseus constantly searches for an hospitable reception. Similarly, Latin poetry is also underpinned by strong codes of hospitality. Codes of hospitality are not however reserved to Classical Antiquity, as Kant (1780/1998) advocates the individual right to shelter in any country for a limited period of time. This was codified in French national hospitality during the revolution when Saint-Just in the *Essai de Constitution* stated:

“The French people declares itself to be the friend of all peoples; it will religiously respect treaties and flags; it offers asylum in its harbours to ships from all over the world; it offers asylum to great men and virtuous unfortunates of all countries; its ships at sea will protect foreign ships against storms.” (Saint-Just 1793 cited in Duval, 1984, p. 441).

When reviewing French revolutionary codes of hospitality, Wahnich (1997a) identifies that its *raison d'être* was offering sanctuary and security to all, highlighting a modern hospitality enigma: the situation where nation states want their immigrants treated as sacred guests but pay scant attention to their own laws of hospitality (Wahnich, 1997b). Previous studies, for example, Bolchazy (1993) have used anthropological studies from the early part of the 20th Century to compare the evolution of hospitality in Roman times (described by poets and others), however, most of the anthropological sources come from the era of Frazer (see Frazer, 1911, 1923). Typically, anthropologists from that time read missionary and travellers' reports for examples of quaint customs. Then their data was reconstructed in logical sequence to illustrate that human societies everywhere undergo a uni-linear development through parallel stages, lacking in any clear methodological framework (Saller, 1979).

In contemporary times, nations admitted a certain number of migrants conditionally; Schérer (1993) observes that French codes of hospitality have become an impossible luxury. Moreover, Derrida (1999) quotes former French minister of immigration Michel Rocard who in 1993 stated, with respect to immigration quotas, that France could not offer a home to everybody in the world who suffered. Rosello (2001), examining France's traditional role as the *terre d'asile* (land of sanctuary) for political refugees, contrasts the image of a welcoming France with France as part of the 'Fortress Europe'. In this sense, it is easy to observe the disdainful manner in which migrants have been treated; particularly through the withdrawal of governmental hospitality.

This study extends previous work on codes of hospitality as they have not been considered in a theoretical manner nor interrogated for potential tourism development. Therefore, exploring social exchange through the Pashtunwali, the study considers two key research questions, namely: how is social exchange characterised through the Pashtunwali? And, does the code preclude the commercialization of Pashtun culture for tourism development? This also extends SET and its framing of some cultural exchange practices in particular through a hybrid framework for negotiated and reciprocal exchange. Finally it addresses some methodological

challenges for collecting data from regions of conflict and from research subjects such as the armed forces.

Methodology

Context

Afghanistan is composed of different tribes, the large Central-to-Eastern belt occupied by the Pashtun (also referred to as Pakthun or Pathan). ‘Afghan’ and ‘Pashtun’ are largely thought of as being synonymous throughout local communities (Glatzer, 1998) as Pashtuns are viewed as being the founding tribe of the Afghan state (Jawad, 1992). After the invasion of the Soviets in 1979 and civil war, drought, the US military campaign, and the fall of the Taliban government there was a diaspora (Ahmad & Boase, 2003; Jawad, 1992), however Iran and other neighboring nations are putting pressure on immigrants to return (Marsden, 2001). Pashtuns tend to be nomadic, resulting in conflicts with neighboring tribes over certain privileges, such as the right to pastureland (Marsden, 2001), nevertheless, the Pashtun tribe appears to have an overarching influence over state affairs. The dominance of the Pashtun tribe in Afghanistan appears fairly natural, however, the manner in which they have achieved power through cultural values is complex as it appears the values and customs of the Pashtuns have influenced wider Afghani and Iraqi political scenes. The Pashtuns are thought to be the largest Muslim tribal society (Ahmad & Boase, 2003) and the most developed and expansive in the world (Glatzer, 2002).

The Pashtun tribe is of heterogeneous origin where its structure is not defined by patriarchal or matriarchal relationships; rather the structure and hierarchy of the tribe is open to continuous reorder, resulting in great social complexity (Glatzer, 2002). Strickland (2007, p. 45) notes there is immense self-pride in labeling oneself a Pashtun, by “calling no man Lord and [admitting] inferiority to nobody.” Believing fiercely in independence, where dependence is seen as a sign of weakness, to the extent that they prefer to be self-employed rather than work for someone else, even though income may be greater with the latter (Jawad, 1992).

Data Collection

Little is known about the social exchange facilitated through Pashtun culture, as the tribe and wider region are overlooked areas of research interest, therefore we adopt a three-stage mixed methods, sequential explanatory design, approach (Alexander, MacLaren, O’Gorman, & Taheri, 2011; Creswell, 2009; Panyik, Costa, & Rátz, 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Supporting interviews, as the initial mode of enquiry, are soldiers’ weblogs and testimonial narratives in the form of diaries.

Oral History Interviews

Stage one consisted of oral history interviews: “the recording of personal testimony delivered in oral form” (Yow, 2005, p. 3). Due to its exploratory nature in eliciting perceptions and understandings of Pashtun culture, 17 extended thematic, semi-structured oral history interviews were carried out with military service personnel who work closely with the Pashtun people whilst serving in the allied military campaign in Afghanistan, see Figure 1. As Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007, p. 28) note “the challenge of interview data is best mitigated by data collection approaches that limit bias”, therefore, the study adopted a strategy of interviewing personnel at different hierarchical levels.

Netnography

Stage two consisted of a netnography of military personnel who experienced first-hand the customs, traditions and lives of the Pashtun people. Online weblogs are a form of internet-based diary where individuals, in this case frontline soldiers, access the internet and update relevant websites with new entries. Netnography is commonly described as ethnography adapted to the study of online communities (Kozinets & Handelman, 2004), i.e. interpreting blogs as narratives, written post hoc and to a reflective plot. The use of narrative is thus not an attempt to recapture the former meaning of an experience as it was first experienced, but is a rearranging of experience in a way that creates possibilities for new meaning to emerge or for the authentication of the original meaning. As Kozinets (2002, p. 61) observes, netnographies are “faster simpler and less expensive than traditional ethnography” and online forums are naturally occurring behaviour and responses are therefore not changed by the presence of a researcher (Schau, Gilly, & Wolfinbarger, 2009). Netnography is commonly used in business and management research

and has already been used to identify the norms that determine social capital (Mathwick, Wiertz, & Ruyter, 2008) as well as a broad range of topics including: collecting experiences (Keinan & Kivetz, 2011); identity-related consumption in retirement (Schau, et al., 2009), and brand image (Thompson, Rindfleisch, & Arsel, 2006).



Figure 1: UK Military Personnel working with Pashtuns

Published diaries

The third stage focused on the collection of published diaries. The analysis of soldiers' diaries provides a *testimonial narrative* described by Lindstrom (1988, p. 71) as a research approach which “would seem to be a subset of documentary literature, generally indicating the first-person

accounts of participants in or witnesses to significant events or little-known subcultures.” As a research method it has commonly been used in studies of Latin America (Foster, 1984; Gugelberger & Kearney, 1991; Lindstrom, 1988; Zimmerman, 1991) to elicit the experiences of individuals living in the region. There are substantial benefits in using diaries to elicit perceptions of ethics, commercialization and hospitality reported by military personnel in current Afghan conflicts. Methodologically, diaries limit bias as entries are “composed almost in the midst of impressions and experiences, so to speak” which limits “any summarizing with the benefit of hindsight or later understanding” (Hämmerle, 2009, p. 46).

Data Analysis

The unit of analysis is neither the Pashtun people nor military personnel; rather it is the social exchange developed through the Pashtunwali. Themes arising from the Pashtunwali are developed from the three central modes of enquiry alongside analysis of theoretical and cultural literature, though special attention was given for allowance of the Pashtun people to categorise their own constituents of culture (Levi-Strauss, 1963). Furthermore, the Pashtunwali acted as a template against which the results of the research are analysed and compared. In light of Klein, Dansereau, and Hall’s (1994) article we suggest these findings are valid at the level of the group, as homogeneity is considered a prerequisite for asserting that the construct in question, in this case - social exchange facilitated through the Pashtunwali, applies to the Pashtun people or wide ranging Pashtun group (Dansereau, Alutto, Yammarino, & Dumas, 1984). We argue, like Klein, et al., (1994) that those following the Pashtun code therefore provide a platform for analysis; to provide clear and valid research findings. The following discussion describes these findings, in particular, the three key tenets of exchange.

Exploring exchange through the Pashtunwali

Similar to many tribal societies throughout the world, the Pashtuns have a particular code to which they are expected to stringently adhere as has been done for the last 5000 years; this is called the Pashtunwali (also referred to as Pukhtunwali). Adherence requires the ability to speak the Pashtun native language, Pashtu. It is used to educate, define values for conflict resolution

and to welcome visitors. It ensures tribal pride and self-understanding and the Pashtunwali can be seen to have an equal, if not greater, influence and control over the lives of the Pashtun people as that of Islamic law, (generally Shari'a law) and the laws of the state. Pashtuns believe in its ability to achieve a structured, disciplined society; therefore it becomes important to uncover the characteristics, practices, and forms of social exchange the code actively encourages. Using an exchange lens, the three key tenets of The Pashtunwali: honour (*nang*), revenge (*badal*) and hospitality (*melmastia*) are now discussed before exploring the exchange of hospitality customs and advances in tourism.

Loss of honour within the tribe is viewed as being the worst possible outcome, as membership of the community is therefore in doubt and may even result in violence or death. Our research indicates that a loss of honour impacts upon social standing and community cohesion. The Pashtuns display a civil character, and whilst an exchange relationship where public shame directly translates to a decrease in public standing, which carries financial and social implications for families, our research did not uphold the notion that arguments led to situations whereby violence was frequent. Revenge (*badal*) was found to liberate the Pashtun people to carry out acts of reprisal or retaliation which may be condemned by Islamic or state law. It may not necessarily bring harm to people, however as it was found to be a distinctly social act. It seems that the concept of revenge in a Pashtun context should not be considered a way of retribution or justice; rather it should be seen as a method of re-establishing and constructing norms and values in a tribal setting – a way of addressing perceived social disequilibrium.

The third tenet to emerge from the interviews and literature, and the most important in terms of our investigation, is that of hospitality (*melmastia*), which ranges from the sharing of wealth to the offering of gifts and even physical defense. Hospitality presides over ideas of revenge and this can be seen in certain Pashtun folktales. In the fable of Prince Bahram, the prince spares the life of six *jinn* (invisible, supernatural beings) during combat at the risk of his own life. The reason for this is that the sister of the *jinn* had shown him hospitality by offering him food. The social status of a Pashtun was found to be determined by their honor and this honor is socially constructed. The better that one's hospitality is perceived to be by the village the more honorable

they are considered to be. In order for a Pashtun to become a Khan, signifying one of the highest positions held in the tribal society, he must show extensive evidence of hospitality - a generosity in terms of sharing his wealth, the protection of guests and the offering of asylum to any stranger who desires it, friend or foe. In this respect, hospitality is not confined to a tangible exchange of material goods – rather, hospitality can be seen as an expedient of social status.

Frémeaux and Michelson (2011) suggest ideas of exchanging resources to invoke actions of reciprocity; when one actor gives something to a different actor this necessitates the wider community, tribe or individual to reciprocate and respond in appropriate ways. Here, decision making is based on the concept of subjective expected utility (Emerson & Cook, 1987); an example of which is the exchange of hospitality to guests and strangers in return for increased social standing, where Pashtuns traded personal resources for gains in social standing, for benefits like social prestige.

Within rational choice versions of SET actors make choices whilst guided by cost-benefit considerations (Molm, 1990), and this is what we found. A principal assumption of exchange theory is that of human behaviour as a function of reward and punishment, pleasure and pain, cost and benefit, gain and loss, pay-off and the like (Homans, 1973, p. 12). This mirrors the form of exchange we witnessed; in effect upholding the rational choice stipulation that the satisfaction of actors is the prime mover of exchanges (Zafirovski, 2005). Our research indicates that social exchange facilitated through the Pashtunwali not only maintains a clear negotiable and reciprocal element, it consists largely of ‘general’ patterns. As previously noted, this third form of exchange reciprocity is indirect and stipulates the repayment of kind deeds, but not necessarily by the original recipient or to the original giver (Yamagishi & Cook, 1993). A prime example of this is the exchange of hospitality between families – for different individuals who were travelling. For example, throughout the interview process with military personnel we became increasingly aware of the importance of this theme. As one soldier suggested the sheltering of different men from families was frequent:

“There’s a lot of local traveling on foot. We got to know families who offered shelter to each other in different districts regularly; to different family members too.”

Importantly, this process was found to include anyone within a network of connected families. Though father figures were found to be the person by whom this transaction of sorts was facilitated – their sons and friends were also found to be offered hospitality and shelter from their network; facilitating an indirect series of general exchange.

Hospitality Customs and Practices

As communication improved between the Pashtun people and research participants, local people were seen to emphasize hospitality customs and practices. They were seen to exchange ideas through discussions, and tea was central to any hospitable encounter. As one military representative noted, “The Pashtuns were always friendly and welcoming...whenever we come along they rush out of the fields or compounds, dropping water cans or rakes, waving and jumping around as if we are something special.” Acceptance of the hospitality offered, such as a place to sit or welcoming drinks is not only central to building relationships, it was important for improving social standing:

“As we dismounted it was also noticeably cooler surrounded by all this greenery. The owner appeared and the customary greetings were exchanged and his hospitality offered, a rug was produced ... As we chatted about the different crops that were being grown, plates and plates of grapes were brought for us, grown in their own vineyard and picked not minutes ago.”

Figure 2 would be a typical example of this kind of interaction. Knowing the Pashtun emphasis on hospitality and the offering of gifts, the soldiers and community elders exchange gifts at *shurah*. As one blog reports: “We have bought carpets, glasses and tea pots for the chai in order to be able to host the locals properly. Before each shurah we buy fresh chai and cakes”; “other gifts include footballs and pens for the children”. When the soldiers were posed with the notion of improving social standing through gift giving and exchanging hospitality – through ways and means such as giving tea and personal time, they perceived this generosity to be an ingrained cultural phenomenon – one which was frequent enough to suggest that it may have been linked to social mobility at play.



Figure 1: Soldiers and community engaged in a shurah

“In our time here people [the Pashtuns] have been very friendly. We have shared gifts, discussions, and really got to know the local people. I think their culture promotes warmth to strangers. It is seen as a good thing to be welcoming. In fact, it’s often expected”

A greater concern is the potential for hospitality customs and traditions of the Pashtun people to be exploited, as they are obliged to offer immediate hospitality to anyone who enters their home; which was found to be dangerous, particularly in terms of relationships with local Taliban. Nevertheless, at this point it is clear the Pashtun people use hospitality as a form of exchange, but the question remains as to whether seeing this as a profitable act and ‘commercial’ in a western sense is ethical.

Culture and Traditions: Commercialisation and tourism development

The essence of hospitality in this sense and particular context can be seen to align with classical exchange perspectives. For example, through Mauss' (1969, p.3) analysis of forms and functions of exchange in what was termed 'archaic societies', we begin to develop a clearer picture of the boundaries of hospitality in tribal life. Mauss (1969, p.3) argued exchange was not exclusively related to goods and wealth, real and personal property, and things of personal value: "In the systems of the past we do not find simple exchange of goods, wealth and produce through markets established among individuals." For Mauss, exchange related to wider parts of tribal life; to "courtesies, entertainments, rituals, military assistance, women, children, dances, and feasts" (1969, p.3), all of which were part of a wide and enduring social contract. Consequently, the analysis of the Pashtunwali and particularly the effort placed on welcoming strangers, guests, enemies, those seeking asylum, on sharing wealth through tangible, as well as intangible comforts such as compassion, generosity and benevolence, emphasize the deeply-seated role that hospitality plays in Pashtun culture. Social behaviour in this instance is an exchange of "material goods but also non-material ones, such as the symbols of approval or prestige" (Homans, 1958, p.606). For instance, one only has to consider the role that communication played in facilitating relationships and building social prestige.

Pashtun tribal culture and hospitality traditions must be central to any consideration of commercial development through tourism within post-conflict Afghanistan. As Jawad (1992) claims, hospitality is the main aspect of the Pashtunwali, however Dupree (1973, p.128) warns that "honour and hospitality, hostility and ambush, are paired in the Afghan mind." Building on local grassroots developments in tourism by Pashtuns, there may be a point in the future when commercial development through tourism may be achieved by the involvement of Western organizations. Yet, we contend this may be fraught with difficulties. For example, it might be inappropriate to assume that Pashtun individuals would support employment within a large conglomerate, even though it may offer them greater financial prosperity. Pashtuns value autonomy and therefore would prefer to act as individuals. It depends on how individually driven the Pashtuns are that will determine their level of motivation should they be employed within the tourism industry. The experience of journalists, aid agencies and military operatives in Pashtun

culture, could also be of interest to those within the tourism industry, such as hoteliers, who may experience similar difficulties in training their personnel due to the level of autonomy which Pashtuns have grown to expect and demand. Pashtuns, for example expect autonomy in every way of life and because of this they are generally nomadic. Showing reliance upon another entity - be that another individual within the village or an employer, is believed to be a sign of weakness which affects an individual's honor and reputation.

Afghanistan is a nation with a complex social structure and its customs and traditions can, at first glance appear incomprehensible. When tourism is discussed, traditional approaches to hospitality are central to development in the social, political and economic environment. Reflecting back to McMillan, et al., (2011), and particularly to their discussion of empowerment of Nepali communities within the hospitality industry, parallels can be drawn between their examples and that of Afghanistan. Highlighting examples of how commercial hospitality can be offered at a micro level. With consideration to Pashtun codes of hospitality and the extent to which its provision is expected, it is clear that this represents a community whose affability and openness would support a tourism industry should the political situation allow it. Thus, the commercialization of services, supported by customs and traditions, could assist the development of Pashtun communities post-conflict. In view of the local customs and hospitality traditions, as well as Pashtun views on employment and their desire to maintain their autonomy, it would seem likely that should there be a regular supply of customers in the form of travelers and tourists then this would provide them with the economic incentives to offer this service. For this to be successful, commercial hospitality must yield similar or greater levels of income to those that currently exist for local peoples. However, the Pashtun tradition of autonomy and self-dependence affects their employment and training within an emergent tourism industry.

Social Exchange and Tourism

The exchange of benefits whether tangible or intangible or distinctly negotiable or reciprocal is the underlying basis for, and open secret of, human behaviour (Homans, 1973) and presumably a phenomenon that permeates all social existence (Coleman, 1990). Homans (1973) explains

behavioural psychology as a set of propositions stemming from experimental studies of animals, usually in non-social situations and considers elementary economics as a set of propositions that govern the behaviour of people exchanging material goods for money, in a so-called perfect market. Homans (1973) recognises the differences between behavioural psychology and elementary economics and importantly the distance between humans and animals. However, rather than exploring the reasons why psychology and economics weave together in explaining social exchange, he rather loosely contends they meshed with one another and formed a single set. SET borrows from economics in its attempt to understand human behavior in the marketplace (Uehara, 1990) and Homans' (1973) work attempts to reduce human behaviour to economic behaviour through the "economic analysis of non-economic social situations" (Emerson, 1976, p. 336). However, whether one can claim social life can be reduced to and compared with economic life, through this form of argumentation remains a concern. For instance, Ekeh (1974, p. 112) considers Homans' proposition in a sceptical light: "what is the warrant for this belief in the ability of a combination of two sciences so far removed intellectually to offer such ease in the explanation of human behaviour?"

Therefore, it is argued Homans (1973) felt there was no extrapolation needed in meshing behavioural psychology and elementary economics together in creating the economic analysis of non-economic social situations, and in explaining social behaviour in similar rational terms as economic behaviour. Consequently, it remains difficult for us to objectively theorise exchange relations witnessed through the Pashtunwali and Pashtun culture more widely. However, we argue that SET provides a useful theoretical lens in exploring the importance of hospitality and exchange in Pashtun culture.

Reciprocal exchange theories are based on behaviour thus it becomes difficult to frame a more defined notion of how they are enacted and in what way they could be used to support commercial development. It has been traditionally challenging for economists to accommodate softer theoretical realms, particularly those that attempt to incorporate behaviour and identity. The theoretical basis of elementary economics is concerned with the exchange of quantifiable commodities and the forces that create monopolies within such exchanges. Even at a microeconomic level, discourse has progressed to either omit or aspire to a level of refinement

that does not merit the incorporation of behavioural elements. Thus economic exchange theories are ultimately hard in nature and, although fundamentally useful in projecting development methods, insufficient in scope to directly apply to complex cultures such as that in question.

Following the discussion of the Pashunwali and the cultural dynamics that are implicit in Afghan life it is apparent that there are elements of both reciprocal and more economically driven exchange. The soft, behavioural aspect of the Pashtunwali is learned and implicit; the negotiated element is more structured and economic in nature. The analysis reveals the potential for a hybrid exchange theory that operates on espoused-emergent and explicit-declared levels. The product of recognising this lies in the relatively quantifiable nature of the exchange whilst still allowing it to subsist within day to day social structures. In terms of development this would mean that this hybrid exchange could be used to implement commercial development initiatives whilst being sympathetic to certain cultural sensibilities, particularly the need among Pashtuns to retain autonomy and the image of power and control.

In particular, this study draws from a unique and complex insight into Pashtun life and examines the exchange implicit in Pashtun culture, through the Pashtunwali, a comprehension of tribal hospitality has developed. This highlights the importance of these sources of data as evidence for opportunities in commercial tourism development and also in understanding the implications for development posed by local customs and hospitality traditions. Afghanistan remains politically volatile in tribal areas such as that of the Pashtuns. Nevertheless, studies of community empowerment in developing regions show that potential exists for commercializing customs and traditions on a local level. There is symmetry with the influence cultural traditions routed in hospitality had on the development of society in the West where, for example, hospitality enterprises were used as the catalyst for development along the frontier in the American West (See MacLaren, Young, & Lochrie, 2013). There is perhaps the sense that the connection with these traditions has been lost in the West and arguably so has the type of cultural heritage narrative that we see perpetuated through the codes like the Pashtunwali.

The empirical findings highlight that whilst this might be a reasonable solution in the future, the current political situation in Afghanistan does not support a system which offers so much autonomy to Afghan civilians such as those in the Pashtun areas. In transitional years, this may represent a fruitful method of yielding the required income throughout local communities in order to create a more sustainable Afghan economy, post-conflict.

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